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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/705,472	11/10/2003	Hans-Werner Boumann	CERA-231.2-CONT	5745
24972 7590 02/20/2007 FULBRIGHT & JAWORSKI, LLP 666 FIFTH AVE NEW YORK, NY 10103-3198			EXAMINER PHILOGENE, PEDRO	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3733	

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
3 MONTHS	02/20/2007	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/705,472

Applicant(s)

BOUMANN ET AL.

Examiner

Pedro Philogene

Art Unit

3733

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 November 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 23-33 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 23-33 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: _____

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 23-26,30-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Segmuller et al. (5,549,681).

With respect to claims 23-26,30-33, Segmuller et al disclose a basal finger joint implant, wherein the implant is an uncoupled, two-part implant, wherein the implant comprises a spherical sliding surface; as best seen in the FIGS; and as set forth in column 2, lines 38-39, column 3, lines 8-25, column 5, lines 25-29, lines 55-67, column 6, lines 1-1-10, lines 45-67, column 7, lines 1-3, lines 40-43. Wherein the implant consists of two monolithic components, the proximal component (10) consisting of the hollow-ball-shaped socket bearing (11) with the proximal shaft (13) and the distal component (1) consisting of a ball (2) which is mounted in the socket bearing and is implanted in the finger bone by means of the distal shaft (4). Wherein the spherical sliding surfaces are congruent, one of which is a hollow-ball-shaped socket bearing and the other of which is the surface of the ball; as best seen in the FIGS. The bearing surface of the socket bearing extends beyond the equatorial plane protection against luxation; as set forth in column 7, lines 1-3, column 2, lines 35-40.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 27-29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Segmuller et al. (5,549,681) in view of Whelan, III (4,304,011).

With respect to claims 27-29, it is noted that Segmuller did not teach of an implant wherein adduction is ensured by a cutout; as claimed by applicant. However, in a similar art, Whelan, III, evidences the use of an implant wherein adduction is ensured by a cutout to permit movement during pivotal movement in the manner of the natural joint.

Therefore, given the teaching of Whelan, III, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the device of Segmuller et al, as taught by Whelan, III, to permit movement during pivotal movement in the manner of the natural joint.

Response to Amendment

Applicant's arguments, see Remarks, filed 11/21/06, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 13-22 under 102 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Segmuller et al/Whelan, III.

Conclusion

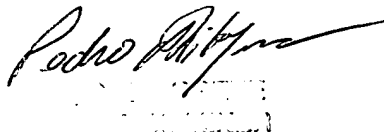
A shortened statutory period for reply to this action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Pedro Philogene whose telephone number is (571) 272-4716. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday 6:30 AM to 4:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eduardo Robert can be reached on (571) 272 - 4719. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Pedro Philogene
February 7, 2007



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pedro Philogene', is written over a rectangular stamp. The stamp contains some illegible text and a grid-like pattern.